

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

Phillips Water Facilities Right-of-Way IDI-5853 (Williams Creek) Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-ID-I010-2014-0013-EA

The BLM completed the Phillips Water Facilities Right-of-Way Amendment and Renewal Williams Creek Environmental Assessment (EA) DOI-BLM-ID-I010-2012-0076-EA which analyzed and disclosed environmental impacts of implementing three management alternatives and the no action alternative on the BLM administered lands in the Williams Creek area of the Little Lost Valley.

Management alternatives were aimed at ensuring compliance with the Endangered Species Act, maintaining valid existing rights, and improving land health.

Based upon a review of the EA, I have determined that the proposed action would not constitute a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment, individually or cumulatively with other actions in the general area. No environmental effects meet the definition of significance in context or intensity as defined under Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations at 40 CFR 1508.27, therefore an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. This finding is based on the context and intensity of impacts as identified in the EA and referenced below.

Context. *This requirement means that the significance of an action must be analyzed in several contexts such as society as a whole (human, national), the affected region, the affected interests, and the locality. Significance varies with the setting of the proposed action. For instance, in the case of a site-specific action, significance would usually depend upon the effects in the locale rather than in the world as a whole. Both short- and long-term effects are relevant (40 CFR 1508.27):*

This project site-specific and does not have international, national, region-wide, or statewide importance. The analysis has shown that the project significance is local in nature and that the renewal and amendment of the water facilities right-of-way will have no significant impact on existing resource values.

Intensity. *This requirement refers to the severity of impact. Responsible officials must bear in mind that more than one agency may make decisions about partial aspects of a major action. The following are considered in evaluating intensity (40 CFR 1508.27).*

Impacts that may be both beneficial and/or adverse.

The analysis documented in EA DOI-BLM-ID-I010-2012-0076-EA did not identify any adversely significant short- or long-term impacts. *The Affected Environment And Environmental Consequences* section of the EA (pages 8 - 26) describes the direct and indirect impacts of the proposed action and each alternative.

The *Cumulative Impacts Of Alternatives* section (pages 26-34) describes the impacts associated with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions that have occurred, or are likely to occur, in the area.

The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.

The environmental analysis documented no effects on public health and safety from any of the actions described in Chapters 3 and 4 of the EA.

Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

The status of these unique resources is documented in Table 7 of the EA. Where present and impacted by the actions, the effects area documented in Chapters 3 and 4. No adversely significant impacts were identified.

The degree to which the effects on the quality or the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

The actions and associated effects are routine in nature within USDI-BLM and no highly uncertain, unique, or unknown risks have been identified.

The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

The actions are within the scope of current regulations and are not expected to establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represent a decision in principle about a future consideration.

The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

The proposed action does not set precedent or represent a decision in principle about a future management consideration. The proposed action includes the renewal and amendment of an existing right-of-way. The requirement for a fish screen to prevent entrainment of threatened and endangered fish species has occurred on several diversion in the Little Lost Valley as well as other areas in the Upper Snake Field Office. No significant cumulative impacts were identified within the EA. Implementation of this decision would not trigger other actions, nor will it represent a decision in principle about future consideration. This project is not connected to any other future actions.

Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.

The EA documents the connected and cumulative impacts with the scope of the analysis area. The analysis did not identify any known significant cumulative or secondary effects. The cumulative effects of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions are considered and disclosed in the *Cumulative Impacts Of Alternatives* section (pages 26-34) of the analysis. No individually or cumulatively significant impacts were identified in the EA.

The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.

The proposed action and alternatives would not adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. A Class III Inventory was conducted within the Area of Potential Effect (APE). No historic properties eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) were identified as a result of the inventory.

The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

The intent of DOI-BLM-ID-I010-2012-0076-EA was to analyze the proposed action and alternatives to determine what management actions were necessary to eliminate the potential of entrainment of bull trout by irrigation facilities authorized on federal land and to protect or enhance water quality in Williams Creek. Williams Creek is occupied habitat for a population of bull trout, however the creek has not been designated as critical habitat bull trout. Alternative C would not adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, state, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

The environmental analysis documents that the proposed action is consistent with Federal, State, and local laws or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

I find that implementing Alternative C, according to Exhibit A – Right-of-Way Map and the stipulations outlined in Exhibit B, does not constitute a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment in either context or intensity. I have made this determination after considering both positive and negative effects, as well as the direct, indirect and cumulative effects of this action and reasonably foreseeable future actions. I have found that the context of the environmental impacts of this decision is limited to the local area and I have also determined that the severity of these impacts is not significant. This document is adequate and in conformance with the *Little Lost-Birch Creek Management Framework Plan (1981)* and as required by 43 CFR 2800.

/s/Jeremy Casterson

Jeremy Casterson, Upper Snake Field Manager

Date: July 10, 2014